Creativity Network Newsletter

“Creativity – don’t let children leave home or school without it!”
~ Patti & Rick Shade

Creativity Network at NAGC

- Creativity Network offers a variety of concurrent sessions beginning on Friday, November 13th, in addition to Poster Sessions.

- Torrance Legacy Awards will be presented on Saturday, November 14, in Room CC North 131A from 2:00 – 3:00 PM. Student authors and artists will be honored for their creative work, judged as outstanding by panels of experts.

- Now in its seventh year, the Torrance Legacy Awards competition offers a unique experience for hundreds of bright, talented students from all over the world to submit their finest work, representing creative writing, visual arts, musical composition, and inventions.

Creativity Night!

NAGC would not be the same without our famous and fun Creativity Night in the Sheraton Valley of the Sun C on Friday from 7:00 - 9:00 PM! Come join the madness and participate in fun activities to take back to your classroom. Find out how you can do more with less!

Save the Dates!

Network Mtg. 11/13/14
Creativity Network meeting in Room CC North 221C: 12:45 - 1:45 PM.

Sunday Super Session! 11/15/15
Join us for Changing Perceptions of Creativity - Dr. Rick Shade and Patti Garrett Shade 9:15 - 10:15 AM. Room CC North 126A. The perceptions are changing . . . it’s about time!
Mini, Little and Pro-C: Creativity in the Classroom

by Luke Duesbery, Ph.D.

Preamble: This article was created as a result of a workshop led by Dr. Ron Beghetto for San Diego Unified Schools. The workshop focused on how to better realize creative potential; both in teachers and with our students. During the session he challenged teachers to resolve some of the tensions between teaching with and for creativity while keeping up with rigorous standards and assessment; he described it as creativity within constraints. Below you'll find my summary of the important messages he shared with us.

It seems with the national movement toward standards and accountability, creativity has been left by the wayside, but there has been a recent resurgence of interest in bringing creativity back into the classroom. However, we can't legislate the teaching of creativity. We can't deliver a No Child Left Uncreative mandate.

Barriers to teaching with and for creativity might include, at times, administrators, parents, and even students themselves; In the classroom, a lack of resources, lack of time, and close alignment of curriculum with standards and standardized tests can present barriers. On the surface, there seems to be a fundamental conflict between our standards and assessment driven system and teaching with and for creativity. But, that isn't really the case. Creativity can live within constraints; indeed, it thrives within constraints, because that is where it is most needed. Teachers need to challenge this core assumption that creativity and standards are incongruous – about this seeming disconnect between creativity and curricular constraints.

Most teachers don't need to radically change what they are doing. Teaching with and for creativity probably means a 10% change in what you are doing, and a 90% change in the way you think; a change in the teaching mindset. We should begin by challenging our own definition of creativity.

Creativity lies on a continuum, from interpretive creativity (Mini-c), to little creativity (Little-c), to professional creativity (Pro-c), to legendary creativity (Big-c). Mini-c happens when someone has a creative moment, and every time it happens it leads to learning. It is a hard-to-notice Mini-c. It tends to happen when there is a problem that needs solving, or where the answer is perhaps not apparent or singular, and it is arrived at personally. Little-c is everyday creativity, and likely does not get any special attention. Little-c is easily incorporated into classrooms with teaching strategies like Problem Based Learning or Socratic Seminar. Pro-c is a level of creativity reserved for those who have gained unique insight into a particular problem or field, one typically gained through many, maybe about ten, years of experience and thought. Legendary-, or Big-c, refers to a person’s purpose and sense of direction. Big-c is widely and easily recognized and praised in public circles.
Mini, Little and Pro-C: Creativity in the Classroom (cont.)

In all cases, creativity is personal and meaningful, and depends on the individual. And, if creativity is personal, then it is also dependent on the context surrounding the need to be creative. Teachers can build classroom environments that are encouraging, but can also, inadvertently, create those that are not. Teachers probably can't destroy creativity, but they can discourage a child’s willingness to take risks and experience creative moments. Monitoring and surveillance can lead to the feeling of being judged, that it is wrong to make mistakes. Comparison, competition, or expected evaluation can lead to a student feeling inadequate. Expected rewards can strip away intrinsic reasons to engage creatively with a task, and may lead to conformity type behavior.

To encourage creativity, teachers can create spaces where students believe in their own ideas. Where they feel safe to share new ideas, ones that may only be new to them, personally, or to their peers. In a classroom, the creative process involves expressing original ideas and then converging based on constraints.

Mini-c can grow into Little-c. It is in the small, throwaway moments (micro-moments) of everyday interactions with students where teachers need to stop and think. By cultivating an appreciation for these moments, teachers might better recognize and avoid stifling creativity. Teachers can miss these moments for many reasons. Our cognitive wiring makes us particularly efficient at blocking things out, when we feel the need to focus. A lack of mindfulness, not paying attention to our surroundings because we are busy or distracted can also lead to lost micro-moments. When teachers are determined to achieve predestined outcomes in classrooms, for example a daily math objective, micro-moments can be lost.

When teachers ask questions to which they already know the answer they communicate to students that they are interested in a single answer, and not a divergent and creative response. The stereotypical Initiation-Response-Evaluation (IRE) in which teachers ask a question and choose single students to respond, followed closely by praise or redirection, can create a classroom dynamic in which students simply seek to provide the answer the teacher wants, and not foster creativity. When students are not sure they are right, they stop taking risks, and will not raise their hand to offer a response.

Instead, teachers can add the idea of exploration back into their rhetoric; the idea that different students can each respond with different ideas that can be explored more deeply. Teachers can approach curricular surprises with curiosity, and encourage students to explain their reasoning for novel responses. This need not happen all the time; teachers need to build skill in knowing when to focus on students understanding them, versus knowing when to focus on understanding students. Knowing when to step in and knowing when to step out of the students’ way lies at the core of teaching with and for creativity, within the constraints of course.

If you have questions or would like to know more you can contact Luke at duesbery@mail.sdsu.edu
Creativity Resources

Dealing with Perfectionism in Your High Ability Program

by Shannon Anderson

As a high ability coordinator, there are many things to ponder: Do we have a defensible, fair identification plan? Are our academic services in each domain providing appropriate enrichment and acceleration? Are we communicating with parents and stakeholders effectively? Are we providing for the social and emotional needs of our high ability and gifted students? How are we dealing with perfectionism?

For our school corporation, we believed our identification and the academic side of things were always improving and going in the right direction. However, when it came to some of the social and emotional concerns, we didn’t believe we were doing much to address the issues. One major area of concern was the increased incidences of perfectionism. We were witnessing students who were overly competitive, too hard on themselves, or using areas of failure as a reason to give up rather than a place to learn and grow.

To address this growing concern, I teamed up with our guidance counselor to provide guidance and develop lessons on perfectionism for our high ability cluster classrooms. We used Carol Dweck’s research on Growth Mindset to try to help our students see mistakes and trials as opportunities to learn and improve. We gave examples of famous people that experienced failure and went on to become highly successful. Lastly, we played games with the kids that were completely based on chance to provide a lesson on how to “lose” gracefully” and not take a loss as a personal reflection.

These activities were important lessons that we don’t always take time to share with our students. I often use picture books as a vehicle for discussion or to illustrate a point in an enjoyable or humorous format. I couldn’t find what I was looking for so I decided to write a book to help students understand and deal with perfectionism. Penelope Perfect became the name of my character - she strives to have everything go according to plan and to do everything precisely. Her world is turned upside down when a thunderstorm knocks out the power in her house and she wakes up late for school. Penelope has to figure out how to deal with her schedule being thrown off and her expectations for herself not meeting up to her standards. Our schools’ guidance lessons now include Penelope Perfect as part of our introduction to our talks on perfectionism. I hope it will be helpful and enjoyable for your students too. This book is now available from Free Spirit Publishing.

You can contact Shannon with questions at www.shannonisteaching.com
Creativity Tips for Home and School

by Dr. Rick Shade

Everyone (parents, teachers, aunts, uncles, grandparents) can become facilitators of creative learning for children. This begins by providing direction, encouragement and support! Next, we all can nurture and protect children’s creativity by embracing the following ideas and concepts:

• **The Importance of Thinking Tools.** Help children understand that thinking can be fun, thinking can be enjoyable, and thinking can be game-like. Convey to children that thinking requires effort, takes time, is enjoyable and that they can get better at it with practice.

• **The Importance of Play.** Imaginative play continues to be a necessary ingredient for enhancing creativity. Let your children play. More importantly, give children enough time to play! Play is an extremely important way children learn and make sense of their world.

• **The Importance of Board Games.** The benefits of playing board games include more interactions with others, practice of math and reading skills, turn taking, cooperation, strategic thinking and problem solving.

• **The Importance of Humor.** Humor has many benefits that help establish a creative climate in the home, school or work environment. These include self-esteem enhancement, improved motivation, anxiety reduction, engagement, and enhanced creative thinking.

• **The Importance of Music.** There are a number of skills associated with both music and creativity. These include forming and recognizing patterns, imagining, energizing the learning, focusing concentration, attention and memory.

• **The Importance of Recognizing and Encouraging Creative Behaviors.** These behaviors exist in all children to varying degrees. Our job is to nurture, protect and enhance the behaviors such as intellectual risk-taking, curiosity, sensitivity to problems, imagination, flexibility, and resiliency in children.

• **The Importance of Questioning.** “What did you wonder about today?” “What did you consider today?” “What did you challenge today?” “What did you question today?” Ask children these types of questions and more every day! Of course the most exciting moments are when children start asking these types of questions!

To find out more about these topics as well as other tools and activities to try, view the 2015 TAGT Legacy Award winning book, *The Creativity Crusade: Nurturing & Protecting Your Child’s Creativity* by Dr. Richard Shade & Patti Garrett Shade. This resource is available at [www.raspo.com](http://www.raspo.com)
Creativity Resources

How Might You Weave Creativity Into Your Curriculum?

by Cyndi Burnett and Julia Figliotti

Creativity is a key skill for your students, both within the classroom and outside of it, so we facilitated more than 100 teachers and creativity experts from around the world to gather their favorite techniques for bringing creative thinking skills into any curriculum. Out of 750 tips and ideas in the book, here are ten favorites to help you deliberately weave various creative thinking skills into every one of your lessons and bring creativity into your classroom!

Ten Ways to Weave Creativity into Your Curriculum

Before beginning a lesson, have students generate a list of 20 questions about the topic. **Skill: Curiosity**
By encouraging your students to explore their own curiosity about a topic, you are both opening their minds to a whole world of potential, and empowering their imaginations to think deeply about the content.

Invite students to invent something that would make a problem less challenging. **Skill: Embrace the Challenge**
This activity will help students turn problems into opportunities for change. Instead of dwelling on the negative aspects of an obstacle, students will focus on its productive and creative potential!

Stop reading a story at the climax and list all the possible conclusions. **Skill: Produce and Consider Many Alternatives**
This exercise is a lot of fun – it engages the class and allows for some wild and crazy ideas to come forward. Who knows? It may even lead a few of your students down the path of writing!

Watch old Science Fiction videos and TV shows and see what has actually been invented. **Skill: Enjoy and Use Fantasy**
This is a great activity! Your students will love the old-time special effects, marvel at the predictions that came to be, and maybe even make a few futuristic predictions of their own!

Have students play PowerPoint karaoke. Control the slides as they present the material. **Skill: Tolerate the Ambiguity**
This one can be a little stressful, so it’s important to keep a light-hearted environment. Students will be teaching others the content, and themselves! For extra fun, ask them to present in character (as a boring professor, as Miss Frizzle, etc.!)
How Might You Weave Creativity Into Your Curriculum? (cont.)

Have students write a Tweet (140 characters or less) to highlight what they have learned. **Skill: Highlight the Essence**

Finally, students can put all of their tweeting to good use! And if they use less than 140 characters to reflect on a lesson, encourage the use of hashtags. #becausewedonthaveenoughofthosealready

Switch theoretical perspectives – students defend a point of view that they don’t agree with. **Skill: Look at it Another Way**

This exercise is interesting to participate in, and even more interesting to watch. At first, your students will end up arguing against their assigned perspectives, but with gentle reminders, they may even convince themselves that this new point of view is the way to go!

**Change the lyrics of a Popular Song to Match a Lesson**
**Skill: Make it Swing! Make it Ring!**

Music makes everything more memorable! By applying familiar music to the words of your lesson, students will have more fun learning about a topic, and an easier time remembering the details.

**Have students pick a superhero and think about how he/she might solve the problem.**
**Skill: Break Through and Extend the Boundaries**

By thinking beyond their own perspectives, students will be able to see ideas outside of their normal view. This can also be applied to other well-known individuals: musicians, activists, politicians, and more!

Literally keep things (windows, doors, books) open to see what other things come in (i.e. leaves, wind, people, dust). Use this as a metaphor for open minds and ideas. **Skill: Keep Open**

Who would’ve thought that such a simple parallel could have such a strong message behind it? This exercise can be brought back as the perfect reminder to defer judgment and not reject – or accept – ideas too quickly.

For these ideas and hundreds more, check out *Weaving Creativity into Every Strand of Your Curriculum* by Dr. Cyndi Burnett and Julia Figliotti. It incorporates the input of creativity professionals and educators worldwide to bring you ways to bring creativity into your lesson plans from kindergarten through college.

**Kindle:** [http://tinyurl.com/weaving-kindle](http://tinyurl.com/weaving-kindle)
**Black & White:** [http://tinyurl.com/weaving-bw](http://tinyurl.com/weaving-bw)
**Color:** [http://tinyurl.com/weaving-in-color](http://tinyurl.com/weaving-in-color)
Creativity Resource Links

Creative Thinking for the Classroom
Submitted by, Dr. Cyndi Burnett

Looking for an engaging resource for teaching Creative Problem Solving in your classroom? Check out Creative Thinking for the Classroom, an animated video series for teachers and students ages 10-18! This resource gives educator access to five steering videos with Dr. Cyndi Burnett, a faculty member at the International Center for Studies in Creativity at SUNY Buffalo State. On top of that, you will also have access to 18 short, animated videos designed for your students that teach the principles of Creative Problem Solving. Alongside a supplementary workbook that is free to download and distribute to your students, Creative Thinking for the Classroom offers a way to teach these integral skills in as little as ten minutes per day. Go to http://tinyurl.com/TCTC4T to purchase the course, and use the code NAGC for 20% off the original price!

Hawaii Gallery of Talent
Submitted by, Christine Ohtani-Chang

Go to http://higifted/gallery to find our 2015-16 online gallery - a call to students in the visual arts! The gallery is open to professional artists, as well as schools as a whole and students. I encourage affiliates to share this window of talent with their constituents.

Notecard Confession
Submitted by, Christine Robin Hawley-Brillante

Thinking about inspiring student creativity through the alternative assessment of a Notecard Confession from the perspective of a fictional character or historical figure. Here is a humorous Willy Wonka example I made: https://vimeo.com/129237414

How Creativity Works in the Brain
Submitted by, Kathy Green

Creativity Network Highlights NAGC Convention 2015

Join us for the many different Creativity Network events at the convention!

**Creativity Concurrent Sessions - Friday, November 13**
Creativity Network offers a variety of Concurrent Sessions beginning on Friday, November 13th, in addition to a Round Table and Poster Sessions.

**Creativity Night - Friday, November 13**
NAGC would not be the same without our famous and fun Creativity Night in the Sheraton Valley of the Sun C on Friday from 7:00 to 9:00 PM! Come join the madness and participate in fun activities to take back to your classroom. Find out how you can do more with less!

**Creativity Network Meeting - Friday, November 13**
Would you like to find out more about our Network and be an active participant? We would love for everyone interested to join us at our Creativity Network Meeting on Friday, November 13 from 12:45 – 1:45 PM in room CC North 221C. Feel free to bring us fresh ideas to work on this year!

**The 2015 Torrance Legacy Awards: An Invitation to Create**

*Saturday, November 14  2:00 PM – 3:00 PM Room CC North 131A*

Connie L. Phelps, Emporia State University, Emporia, KS; Kathleen Nilles, National Association for Gifted Children, Washington, DC; Joan Smutny, The Center for Gifted, Wilmette, IL; Maria Freeman, The Center for Gifted and Midwest Torrance Center for Creativity, Glenview, IL; Stephen T. Schroth, Towson University, Towson, MD; Bonnie Cramond, University of Georgia, Athens, GA

Now in its seventh year, the Torrance Legacy Awards competition offers a unique experience for hundreds of bright, talented students from all over the world to submit their finest work, representing creative writing, visual arts, musical composition, and inventions. In this session, the organizers of the competition will share how they work with schools, teachers, and students to stimulate young talent. Parenting for High Potential has launched a special forthcoming issue devoted to E. Paul Torrance's legacy. Participants will gain information on the competition and the process involved through activities and strategies that evoke student imagination and creative thinking.

**Sunday, November 15 – Super Session!**

**Changing Perceptions of Creativity!**  
Room: CC North 126 A  9:15 – 10:15

*Dr. Rick Shade and Patti Garrett Shade, Denver, CO*

Perceptions of creativity are changing as global forces drive educational initiatives. Creativity is a dynamic that challenges mindsets and elevates student learning to passionate levels of productivity. Designing innovative classrooms requires the integration of creativity into all teaching and learning. This session will demonstrate creativity as instructional skill sets and as a curricular framework. Discussion topics include: myths, research misconceptions and personal to global levels of creativity. Participants will leave with new mindsets, real instructional tools and with a determination to bring creativity to every student, every teacher, every subject, every school . . .EVERY DAY! All attendees will receive a desk-top resource flipbook on Gifted Education, Creativity, Differentiation, Thinking Tools, Multiple Intelligences or Executive Function as a handout for this session.
What is Creativity Anyway?

In the Western world, many people think that creativity is primarily artistic in nature—like painting a landscape, choreographing a dance, or writing a poem—and the terms creative and artistic are often used interchangeably. In the Eastern world, however, creativity is generally considered to be a scientific discovery that leads to inventions such as electricity, antibiotics, or the computer. However, creativity is far broader than either of these interpretations. ~ K.K.

Creativity is a process that leads to innovation in all fields. Creativity occurs in all social endeavors, including such things as the arts (writing, painting, photography, cinematography, dance, music, poetry, etc.), invention, mathematics, engineering, natural, social, and biological sciences, medicine (including physical therapists’ treatments for patients using materials found in the environment), business, parenting, leadership, sports (including Muhammad Ali’s creative boxing style), teaching, and technology. The end result of the creative process is a new or better product, which is innovation. For example, Apple creates and releases the latest new model of its iPhone, and Samsung looks at what Apple built, and quickly designs, manufactures, and sells a better model phone. Yet, nothing is really new under the sun, as even a new product is often developed as an extension or a combination of existing ones.

For a product to be an innovation, it must be both unique and useful. I use unique instead of novel or new, as everything is often a remix. To be creative, the work of an artist must be unique in its expression or technique. Exhibiting only technical proficiency in the arts—the ability to paint a scene or dance just like a famous artist—does not necessarily mean that a person is exercising creativity, but rather a technician’s artistic skills. True creativity requires the person to put his or her own unique flair into it.

Innovation is either tangible or intangible. Steve Jobs’s creation of the iPhone and Georgia O’Keeffe’s paintings are tangible innovations. Nelson Mandela’s democracy and Albert Einstein’s relativity theory are intangible innovations. Both tangible and intangible innovation must be useful, valuable, or effective to people to be considered innovative. A person may think of many unique ideas, but unless they are applied in some way, they remain ideas in the frustrated dreamer’s head, and are thus not useful.
Based on the size of usefulness, the degrees of innovation range from small *i* to Big *I* innovation. Small *i* examples are not hard to come by. Their impact on others is minimal, and they are created by everyday people in everyday life—often without their even knowing it. Many of us practice small *i* innovation, for example, when we put together whatever is in the refrigerator to make a meal, not following a recipe. Voila! An innovative, home-cooked meal!

Big *I* innovation occurs when an individual creates an innovation that affects many people's lives. Big *I* examples include a Nobel Prize winner's contribution to human knowledge or the way we do things, such as Marie Curie's discovery of radioactivity (1903); Albert Einstein's discovery of the law of the photoelectric effect (1921); and Nelson Mandela's ending South Africa's apartheid system of racial segregation and leading a peaceful revolution to democracy (1993).

There is no inherent difference in impact between Big *I* and small *i*—both are equally important. I suggest that a level of usefulness of innovation ranges based on U (usefulness) = T (time as years) x N (number of people affected). For example, if my unique parenting theory (like my 4S Creativity model) is useful for my parenting for 20 years, the usefulness of the innovation is 20. If the theory is useful for 100,000 people for 10 years, the usefulness of the innovation is 1,000,000.

References


